

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021  
Youth and Young Adult Provisions

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Overview of Today's Webinar

- Summary of Provisions
- Practice Tips for Those Working with Foster Youth and Young Adults
- Q&A

*Check out our website for all the resources discussed in this presentation at <https://www.publiccounsel.net/cafl/cafl-news/covid-19-news-and-resources/>.*

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Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021  
(Public Law No: 116-260)

- Provisions related to current and former foster youth (pages 701-711)
- Goal to support these youth and young adults 14-27 during the pandemic
- Increases funds to DCF to support youth and young adults
- Relaxes/expands eligibility for support

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### Who Might Benefit from This Law?

- Youth currently in DCF custody 14 or older (via a CRA or C&P)
- Young adults 18 to 22 who “signed back in” to DCF care
- Young adults who left DCF care at 18 or older and have not yet turned 27
- Youth who were in foster care and were subject of guardianship or adoption that was finalized after their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday

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• **Children and Young Adults in Placement FY2019 – Demographics-Race/Ethnicity**  
 Table 14 shows that at the end of FY2020, White (40%), Hispanic/Latino (32%), and Black (14%) of accounted for the majority of children served by the Department. A similar distribution is also young adults (18 & older).

**TABLE 14. Race/Ethnicity of Children and Young Adults in Placement FY2020<sup>(1)</sup>**

|   | Children (0-17)   | Young Adults (18 & Older) |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------|
| White                                     | 3,117 40%         | 617 38%                   |
| Hispanic/Latino (of any race)             | 2,688 32%         | 504 32%                   |
| Black                                     | 1,205 14%         | 317 21%                   |
| Asian                                     | 66 1%             | 41 3%                     |
| Native American                           | 20 *              | - -                       |
| Pacific Islander                          | 2 *               | - -                       |
| Multi-Racial (two or more races)          | 752 9%            | 77 5%                     |
| Unable to Determine/Declined              | 303 4%            | 32 2%                     |
| Missing                                   | 1 *               | - -                       |
| <b>Total in Placement Fiscal Year End</b> | <b>8,418 100%</b> | <b>1,592 100%</b>         |

<sup>(1)</sup> All races exclude children of Hispanic/Latino origin. \*Less than 1% after rounding.

DCF Annual Report FY2020 (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/dcf-annual-reportfy2020/download>)

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### Changes in Three Major Areas

- Extended Care/Re-Entry
- Financial Support and Services Through the Chafee Program
- Financial Support through the Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program

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Extended Care – Pre-COVID

- State law requires DCF to continue responsibility of foster youth until age 22. G.L. c. 119, sec. 21 and 23(f)
- Federal law provides funding to states until age 21 under Title IV-E.
- Young adult must be attending school or working at least 80 hours per month. G.L. c. 119, sec. 23(f); 42 USC § 675(8)(B)(iv)42 USC
- DCF must develop transition plan 90 days before young adult leaves DCF care. G.L. c. 119, sec. 23(f); 42 USC § 675(5)(H)

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Extended Care/Re-Entry under New Law

- Waives school/work requirements if unable to meet due to pandemic
- Prohibits states from discharging young adults due to age (turning 21)
- Requires states to notify young adults who were discharged due to age, and offer to let them return to care
- Effective only until September 30, 2021

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Chafee Services Pre-Covid

- Federal funding to states to support current and former foster youth and young adults to transition to adulthood
- DCF administers a variety of different programs with different eligibility criteria
- Ages 14 to 23 under state law (federal law until 26)

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### Chafee Services Under New Law

- Increase in funding to states to spend before 9/30/21
- Eligibility for new funding up to age 27

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### How DCF Might Spend Additional Chafee \$

- Direct Cash Assistance
- Discharge Support Services
- Housing assistance (through vouchers or other programs)
- Life Skills Support
- Transportation (driver's ed, insurance, purchase car)
- Outreach Workers

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### Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program

- Provides grants for tuition and other costs of attending post secondary education
- Eligible populations include:
  - Young adults who remain in care after age 18
  - Left foster care at age 18 or older
  - Left foster to adoption or guardianship after age 16

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**Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program  
under New Law**

- Increases funding to states for ETV Program
- Eligibility for new funding increased from age 26 to age 27
- Maximum grant size increased from \$4,000-\$12,000 per person
- Waiver of enrollment and satisfactory academic progress requirements if unable to meet them because of COVID.
- These provisions effective through 9/30/22.

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